

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELGRA 00709 190822Z

21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NIC-01

CU-02 SCCT-01 OMB-01 SAM-01 BIB-01 /063 W

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R 190735Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1985

INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 0709

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT YO

SUBJ: REPORTS OF DECEMBER NATIONALIST DEMONSTRATIONS
IN PRISTINA

REF: BELGRADE 0211

1. REFTEL NOTES PRESS REPORTS OF SIZABLE DEMONSTRATIONS BY ALBANIAN NATIONALIST ELEMENTS IN PRISTINA IN DECEMBER. TWO AMERICAN INSTRUCTORS AT PRISTINA UNIVERSITY, REPORTED SITE OF DEMONSTRATIONS, HAVE RECENTLY TALKED TO EMBOFFS. BOTH INDICATE "DEMONSTRATIONS" WERE CONFINED PRIMARILY TO SLOGAN-PAINTING INSIDE ONE OR TWO STUDENT DORMITORIES AND DID NOT INVOLVE LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS. BOTH WERE UNAWARE OF STREET DISTURBANCES OF ANY KIND, OR OF ANY ACTIVITY OUTSIDE DORMITORY BUILDINGS.
2. ONE INSTRUCTOR NOTED IMMEDIATE REACTION OF ALBANIAN STUDENTS WAS TO BLAME SLOGANS ON SERB PROVOCATEURS TRYING TO MAKE TROUBLE FOR ALBANIANS, WHEREAS SERBS IMMEDIATELY BEGAN CITING INCIDENT AS EVIDENCE OF ALBANIAN NATIONALISM.
3. ESSENTIALLY SAME VERSION OF "DEMONSTRATIONS" WAS REPORTEDLY GIVEN TO AP CORRESPONDENT HERE BY LC MEMBER ON UNIVERSITY FACULTY IN EARLY JANUARY.

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PAGE 02 BELGRA 00709 190822Z

4. COMMENT: TWO INSTRUCTORS AND LC MEMBER ARE VIRTUALLY ONLY PRIMARY SOURCES SO FAR ON PRISTINA HAPPENINGS. ON THIS BASIS WE BELIEVE THIS VERSION OF STORY IS PROBABLY CORRENT AND THAT NEWS REPORTS WERE CONSIDERABLY EXAGGERATED.

5. BUT THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF CONTINUING SERB-ALBANIAN DIVISIONS IN KOSOVO. AT THE UNIVERSITY THE ABOVE INSTRUCTORS NOTED ALMOST COMPLETE SEGREGATION OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, ALBANIAN PRIDE IN THEIR EXPANDING INFLUENCE AND DECREASING IMPORTANCE OF SERB MINORITY IN KOSOVO, AND AWARENESS AMONG BOTH ALBANIANS AND SERBS OF HIGH ALBANIAN BIRTH RATE AND INCREASING STATISTICAL IMPORTANCE OF ALBANIAN MINORITY IN COUNTRY AS A WHOLE.
TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONALISM, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: johnsorg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BELGRA00709
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750058-0920
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750233/aaaabdla.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BELGRADE 0211
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: johnsorg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by johnsorg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORTS OF DECEMBER NATIONALIST DEMONSTRATIONS IN PRISTINA
TAGS: PINS, PINT, YO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006